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## Mile of Music: Lawrence Helps Launch First-of-its-Kind Downtown Appleton Festival

*Posted on: August 6th, 2013 by Rick Peterson*

When a four-day music festival featuring more than 100 artists — bands and solo performers — and 182 performances at more than 40 different venues in downtown Appleton opens Aug. 8, Lawrence University will be among the most active participants.

In addition to hosting the Mile of Music's headliners, among them Cory Chisel and The Wandering Sons, The Candles, Rodney Crowell and Justin Townes Earle in the Lawrence Memorial Chapel, several musicians who got their start at Lawrence will be among the performers while other alumni will assist with a series of music education events at the festival.



**AUGUST 8-11**

**HANDCRAFTED ARTISAN FESTIVAL**

~ EST. 2013 • APPLETON, WISCONSIN ~

“Lawrence is excited to play a major role in Appleton’s Mile of Music Festival,” said Brian Pertl, dean of the conservatory of music. “A national festival that celebrates our Appleton community through music is a perfect fit for us. This festival is unique among major music festivals because music education is at the core of its mission. This, of course, ties in perfectly to the mission of our conservatory.”

Among the festival's performers with Lawrence roots are:

- **Fatbook**, a former student band that won two DownBeat “best college/blues/pop/rock group” awards in 2009 and '10. Currently based in Chicago, the band features three Lawrence grads: founder Harjinder Bedi '09, guitar and lead vocals, Evan Jacobson '08 on trombone and Reed Flygt '08 on drums.
- **Jana Nyberg Group**, a five-member band out of Minneapolis/St. Paul managed by Adam Meckler '07, who also plays trumpet in the group. Evan Montgomery '08 and Brian Courage '11 play guitar and bass, respectively in the band as well.
- **Singer/songwriter Trevor Litsey** trades his tuba for a guitar, performing as **The Pernicious Bean**.
- **Bright Kind**, a three-member band featuring Alex Bunke '09 on drums. Eric Klosterman '10 joins the band this weekend on keyboards.
- **Milwaukee-based singer/songwriter Ross Catterton '08**, a multi-instrument musician who plays saxophone, guitar, piano and drums.
- **Holy Sheboygan!**, a seven-piece folk/trash band features an all-Lawrence line-up that includes Julia Blair '11, viola, accordion and lead vocals; Cameron Carrus '13, bass; Ben DeCorsey '10, guitar and mandolin; Jeff Edenberg '10 horn, glockenspiel, recorder and saw; Cary Foxx '12, bass clarinet and tenor sax; and Rachel Graber '13, “recycled percussion” (tire rim, chip bucket, keg); and Liam O'Brien '10, guitar and lead vocals.
- **The four-member Involuntary String Band**, which rocked the Lawrence Chapel last May at the annual honors convocation, features Martha McDonnell '14 on fiddle, Davey Harrison '13 on mandolin, Ilan Blanck '16 on guitar and banjo and Nick Allen '14

on bass.

Beyond performances, music education will be an important aspect of the festival. Leila Ramagopal Pertl, a 1987 Lawrence graduate, will oversee a variety of free, interactive, hands-on music making events ranging from Ghanaian dancing and Brazilian samba drumming to Balinese gamelan and funky rhythm sticking. Assisting her in the instruction will be Bedi, Graber, Eli Grover '11, Jaclyn Kottman '12, Patrick Marschke '13, Brian Pertl '86 and Melissa Mast, wife of associate professor of music Andrew Mast.

Nathan Litt, a 2008 Lawrence graduate who is seriously involved with the festival as a project specialist with Willems Marketing, one of the co-organizers of Mile of Music, sees it as a win-win for Lawrence and Appleton.

“This is a great opportunity for Lawrence and downtown Appleton to collaborate,” said Litt. “Lawrence is a significant partner for the festival and we wouldn’t have been able to have such a dynamic event without the college’s involvement. The conservatory, campus staff and the broader campus community have really stepped up and embraced the festival and its mission. We’ve had numerous students volunteer to help out, which is great.

“I never thought I’d graduate as a government major and end up helping to plan a major event like this,” Litt added. “I’m excited that Mile of Music will highlight what Lawrence can offer to the local community and beyond and I can’t wait to see the Lawrence musicians perform during the fest. I’m looking forward to seeing Mile of Music become an annual event that will continue to have strong Lawrence ties.”

The Lawrence Chapel and Stansbury Theatre will serve as one end anchor on the festival’s “mile” of music. While the Chapel will

host headliners Friday and Saturday evening, Stansbury Theatre will serve as the venue for four “feature” shows Thursday, Friday and Saturday.